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Message Text

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67
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ACDA-05 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 MC-02

/070 W
---------- 058427
R 161638Z DEC 75
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7871
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
USMISSION USBERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL MUNICH
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
USDEL MBFR VIENNA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USDEL SALT TWO GENEVA
USIA WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
CINCEUR

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USIA FOR IBS, IEE, IPS
CINCEUR FOR POLAD

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SUBJECT: SOVIET COMMENTARY ON NATO MINISTERIALS

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1. SUMMARY. SOVIET COMMENTARY ON THE JUST CONCLUDED WEEK OF MEETINGS AT NATO LARGELY FOLLOWS STANDARD LINES. NEW DEPARTURES AND OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST ARE (1) EVIDENT SOVIET CONCERN THAT THE EUROGROUP AUTONOMOUS ARMS SALES AGENCY WILL IN FACT BE SUCCESS-FUL IN DRAWING FRANCE BACK INTO CLOSER COOPERATION WITH NATO; (2) THE SOVIET CONTENTION THAT DESPITE CSCE NATO CONTINUES TO PLACE PRIMARY RELIANCE ON FORCE; AND (3) ABSENCE OF ANY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT IN THE SOVIET PRESS OF LUNS' ANNOUNCEMENT THAT OPTION III WILL BE TABLED SOON. END SUMMARY.

2. THE WEEKEND CENTRAL PRESS CARRIED REASONABLY HEAVY COMMENTARY ON THE NATO MEETINGS. PERHAPS THE MOST CENTRAL OF THE THEMES RUNNING THROUGH THEM ALL WAS EVIDENT WARINESS ON FRENCH ATTRACTION TO THE EURO-GROUP ARMS SALES AGENCY. PRAVDA'S AUTHORITATIVE POLITICAL OBSERVER (AND SOMETIME FRENCH SPECIALIST) YURIY ZHUKOV SAYS THAT NATO CIRCLES DEVELOPED A TWO-PART PLOT TO REGAIN FRENCH PARTICIPATION: THE FIRST WAS SUGGESTION THAT A "SECRETARIAT" TO HANDLE ARMS SALES BE FORMED; WHEN THAT FAILED, NATO MOVED TO SUGGESTION OF AN "AUTONOMOUS AGENCY" IN ORDER TO ANSWER FRENCH CONCERNS. EVEN THIS SUGGESTION PUTS THE FRENCH ON GUARD, ZHUKOV CLAIMS, QUOTING FRENCH SOURCES ON INTERNAL OPPOSITION (MICHEL DEBRE, THE PS AND THE PCF) TO JOINING SUCH AN ORGANIZATION. HE ADDS THAT SAUVAGNARGUES ASSURED DEBRE IN A LETTER DEC 5 THAT FRANCE WOULD NOT TAKE PART IN "THE ORGANI-ZATION REFERRED TO AS THE EUROGROUP". ZHUKOV'S FINAL PARAGRAPH, PRESUMABLY SARCASTICALLY, NOTES THAT THE FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER ANNOUNCED THAT FRANCE WOULD CARRY ON DISCUSSIONS WITH ITS EUROPEAN ALLIES ON THESE QUESTIONS, THOUGH WITHOUT ANY CONNECTION TO EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS.

3. KRASNAYA ZVEZDA'S USUAL POLITICAL COMMENTATOR COLONEL PONOMAREV EXPECTEDLY TAKES THE HARDEST LINE ON THE NATO MEETINGS. HE BEMOANS THE FACT THAT EVEN AFTER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

THE SUCCESSFUL SUMMIT MEETING AT HELSINKI NATO CONTINUES TO RELY PRIMARILY ON FORCE, QUOTING FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTERS' COMMUNIQUE THE NATO CONTENTION THAT DEFENSE FORCES ARE NECESSARY TO DEFEND AGAINST POLITICAL PRESSURE AS WELL AS MILITARY THREAT. HE ADDS THAT THE NEW U.S. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WAS GUILTY OF ATTEMPTING TO EXERT PRESSURE ON HIS ALLIES FOR ADDITIONAL DEFENSE EXPENDITURE (PRAVDA'S DEC 14 WEEKLY

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REVIEW NOTES APPROVINGLY THAT, ACCORDING TO LUNS, ONLY HALF OF THE ALLIES ARE SPENDING AS MUCH AS LUNS WOULD LIKE THEM TO DO). PONOMAREV ALSO REFERS DARKLY TO U.S. EFFORTS TOBRING SPAIN INTO THE ALLIANCE, BUT NOTES WITH SATISFACTION THAT NO DECISION ON SUCH AN ACTION WAS TAKEN. PONOMAREV ENDS WITH SHARP CRITICISM OF THE WEST'S ALLEGED ANTI-SOVIET CAMPAIGN OF RECENT TIMES (WHICH HE DOES NOT TIE DIRECTLY TO CSCE), CITING AS EXAMPLE PUBLICATION OF HILL-NORTON'S REPORT AT THE NATO SESSIONS.

4. PONOMAREV GRUDGINGLY VOICES SATISFACTION THAT THE NATO FOREIGN MINISTERS ANALYZED THE COURSE OF EAST-WEST RELATIONS WITH MORE SOPHISTICATION THAN DID THE DEFENSE MINISTERS--A POINT ALSO MADE BY YASNEV IN A PRAVDA DEC 14 COMMENTARY. BOTH YASNEV AND PONOMAREV USE ALMOST IDENTICAL WORDING IN REPORTING THAT ANGOLA WAS A SUBJECT OF MUCH DISCUSSION, WITH EVENTS THERE "EVIDENTLY NOT TO NATO'S LIKING". AND YASNEV, ALONE IN THIS REGARD, REPORTS THAT MBFR HAD BEEN DISCUSSED--THOUGH EVEN HE DOES NOT MENTION LUNS' ANNOUNCEMENT ON OPTION III.
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